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## **The New Microtransit System ‘Wheels2U’ Launching This Week in Norwalk**

*Cutting-edge transportation option will be free for a limited time*

(Norwalk, Conn.) - The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and the City of Norwalk are proud to announce the launch of [Wheels2U](#), a new form of public transportation allowing residents to request rides and be picked up in shuttles, creating an on-demand transportation service. Using a smartphone app called Microtransit by TransLoc, riders can request a pick-up and drop-off location and watch the vehicle as it approaches. While on the shuttle, other riders may be picked up and added to the ride. Along the ride, the app will consistently display the current location of the bus and projected time of arrival.

Microtransit is a very new form of transportation that is rapidly growing in large and small cities across the United States such as Boston, Sacramento, San Francisco, and New York. The best way to describe Microtransit is “like Uber, but for public transit.” Norwalk is among an elite group of transit agencies across the nation participating in microtransit pilot programs. The city and state in partnership are leading the way by implementing this innovative, on-demand service.

“Norwalk is the first city in Connecticut to launch a microtransit service. This innovative and modern approach to transportation is an investment in Norwalk. Residents and tourists can explore many of the amenities Norwalk has to offer without having to worry about parking. I encourage the public to take advantage of this wonderful new service.” - [Norwalk](#) Mayor Harry Rilling.

This modern approach to mass transit takes advantage of the efficiencies that can be gained from picking up one rider and then others that are on the way as it drives the first to their destination. The technology provides the driver with assistance as well. For the driver, the app offers navigation directions and a sophisticated algorithm to determine the optimal route to pick up and drop off riders in a timely manner.

The Norwalk Transit District, in partnership with the City of Norwalk, State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, is implementing the service. It is currently a six-month pilot program beginning on Thursday, September 13 and will run four days a week - Thursday through Sunday. The service does not have routes or stops like a typical bus system. There is a designated service area where the bus operates. The cost of a ride is free during the pilot period but will have an associated ticket price if the service is successful and rolled out permanently or on a larger scale.

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“The Wheels2U microtransit service is an excellent example of how we are utilizing technology to improve efficiency and the rider’s experience. Our goal for this pilot program is to better understand how a public transportation service can take advantage and leverage the mobile technology that is in our hands every day.” - Kim Morton, Chief Executive Officer, [Norwalk Transit District](#).

Funding for the pilot transportation program, including allowing it to be free, comes from a partnership with TransLoc and their parent company Ford Smart Mobility, SoNo Collection mall developer Brookfield Properties, The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, The Norwalk Transit District, and the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation as part of its pledge to improve transportation services in Norwalk’s urban core. The vehicles used for the service are part of the Norwalk Transit District’s paratransit fleet. The vehicles will be used during hours when the vehicles are off peak for the paratransit service. These vehicles are funded 80 percent by the Federal Transit Administration and 20 percent by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation. 100 percent of the operating expenses are supported by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation.

“Public Transportation in the State of Connecticut is growing and changing rapidly. One of our chief goals is to create “Strategic Partnerships” that foster coordination and expand service provision. We are thrilled to provide financial resources and support to the Norwalk Transit District to provide this microtransit pilot. By growing our partnership with the City of Norwalk and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, we are able to maximize the benefit provided by the public funds that we spend, and improve the mobility and quality of life for all of our residents.” - Dennis Solensky, Public Transit Administrator, [Connecticut Department of Transportation](#).

The Wheels2U brand was developed by local Norwalk firm [Silver Creative Group](#). Because the service is unique and unexpected, the brand needs to be visually interesting with clear communication to educate the community about the service. The strategy behind the creative is focused on conveying both technology and approachability. The goal was to portray a look and personality that was modern and tech-friendly as well as being recognizable and inviting.

For fast facts, schedule of operating times, and more information visit [wheels2uNorwalk.com](http://wheels2uNorwalk.com).

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*NOTE: Photography and digital assets available upon request*